(1929) Department.

This SERIES.

G.O. No. 730

DATED 15/4/1929

[Despatch Abstract.]

Legislative Council Question

Elementary Schools - common schools - Catholic schools in the South Kanara District - Notes recorded.

Mr.A.B.Shetty

THE LAW (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT

2194. Will the hon. the Minister for ducation and Local-Self Government b leased to stat

a) whether the present policy of the overnment is to encourage common scho or children of all classes and creeds

b) whether the sentiments expressed b he hon. Minister in regard to this ma t the recent conference of the D.E.O n indication of this policy; and

Education Department.

L.C.Question
(Starred)
No. 2194.
Mr.A.B.Shetty.

1772
18309

Question

Answer

*2104. Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Local-Self Government be pleased to state:-

(a) whether the present policy of the Government is to encourage common school for children of all classes and creeds;

(b) whether the sentiments expressed by the hon. Minister in regard to this matter at the recent conference of the D.E.Os are an indication of this policy; and

(c) whether G.O.No.Misc.104 (Education Department) dated 15th January 1929 laying down that the District Educational Council in South Kanara should allow Catholics [illegible] recognition and aid for schools of

(c) On representations received by Government that according to their Canon Law of the Roman Catholics the Roman Catholic parents are bound to send their Children to Catholic schools and that the Roman Catholics in the South Kanara district find it difficult to obtain recognition and grants-in-a respect of elementary schools ma

by them, the District Educational Council, South Kanara, has been advised to grant recognition and aid to Catholic schools subject to certain conditions.

Law Dept. III-8—3,000—~~3-12-27.~~ 21

QUESTION.—NO. ~~in~~ 17 for the next meeting of the Legislative

Council ~~to be held o~~

~~MITTED~~ that two copies of this Question may be forwarded to the

Law & Equity Department.

~~e~~ Question has been admitted.

* 1772 Q.—Mr. A. B. SHETTY : Will the hon. the Minister for Education nd Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the present policy of the Government is to encourage ommon schools for children of all classes and creeds ;

(*b*) whether the sentiments expressed by the hon. Minister in regard to his matter at the recent conference of the District Educational Officers are an indication of this policy ; and

(*c*) whether G.O. Mis. No. 104, Education, dated 15th January 1929, lays down that the District Educational Council in South Kanara should allow Catholics to get recognition and aid for schools

A.—(*a*) Yes—as far as possible.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) On representations received by Government that according to the Canon Law of the Roman Catholics, the Roman Catholic parents are bound to send their children to Catholic schools and that the Roman Catholics in the South Kanara district find it difficult to obtain recognition and grants-in-aid in respect of elementary schools maintained by them, the District Educational Council, South Kanara, has been advised to grant recognition and aid to Catholic schools subject to certain conditions.

Mr. A. B. SHETTY :—" In view of the answer to clause (*c*), may I know how the Government are going to encourage common schools for children of different classes ? "

The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" The Roman Catholics put forward some religious objections and the Government have got to take them into consideration."

Mr. K. R. KARANT :—" May I know whether this Catholic school is meant for the children of the Catholics only and will not restrictions be placed on local bodies from opening other schools in the locality ? "

The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" No, Sir. The point is that if there are sufficient Catholics to warrant a school for themselves, they will have a Catholic school ; otherwise Catholic children should go to the common school maintained by the local body."

Mr. K. R. KARANT :—" My question is there is a Catholic school in a locality and under the Canon Law it is chiefly for Catholic children, will there be any restrictions placed in such a place preventing the local body from opening a common school on the ground that there is a Catholic school there already ? "

The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" Yes, Sir. If the Catholic school is to be aided from the general funds, naturally there will be no other school opened there."

Mr. ABDUL HAMEED KHAN :—" May I know the reason why the Catholics ant a separate school ? "

The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN : —" That is mentioned in the answer itself to (*c*)."

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EDUCATIONAL OFFICERS CONFERENCE

CHIEF MINISTER'S OPENING ADDRESS

A conference of the District Educational Officers of the Presidency was held this morning in the office of the Director of Public Instruction, Nungambakam with Mr. R. G. Grieve, Director in the chair. The Hon'ble Dr. P. Subbarayan, Chief Minister to the Government of Madras opened the conference. All the District Educational Officers were present.

On arrival the Chief Minister was received by Mr. R. G. Grieve, the Director Messrs. M. A. Candeth and H. F. Sounders, Deputy Directors, Mr. J. C. Chinnappa, Personal Assistant and Rao Bahadur R. Krishna Rao Bhonsle, Secretary to the Commissioner for Government Examinations.

The Director first introduced the Educational Officers to the Chief Minister.

MR. R. G. GRIEVE'S SPEECH

OBJECTS OF THE CONFERENCE

In requesting the Hon. Minister to open the Conference, Mr. R. G. Grieve, Director of Public Instruction said:—

I have first to thank the Hon'ble the Minister for having so readily consented to open the Conference. I regard his presence as evidence of the belief we share with him that it is most desirable that the relationship subsisting between the Minister and the Officers of the Department should be both intimate and cordial.

It may be well to explain the origin and objects of the Conference. Experience last year showed that a frank and full discussion of the problems and difficulties confronting Educational Officers led to useful results both for the headquarters staff and for officers from the mofussil. It seemed, therefore desirable that a Conference should be held this year also; and, further, there are a number of questions, particularly as regards Elementary Education, which demand very early and careful attention, for example to mention a few only at the moment—the problem of wastage, concentration and amalgamation of schools, teachers in Elementary Schools. The agenda for the Conference has been framed having regard to such general questions in preference to some items suggested by officers which had a limited, particular or local application.

I have to mention that the Consulting Architect to Government has kindly consented to speak on school buildings and plans to-morrow and that the Commissioner of Labour has agreed to be present at our discussion on Labour Schools and Schools for the depressed classes. Our thanks are due to both these busy officers.

It will be convenient to refer at this point to a matter which, under present circumstances, I regard as of vital importance. I refer to the need which exists for inspecting officers of all grades being in close touch with Presidents, Chairmen and leading men in the various localities. Personal contact is worth more than a ton of ink and secures better results and better feeling. Goodwill is not produced by files: influence is enhanced by personal regard.

CONDITION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

One of the main topics to be discussed at the Conference is the question of consolidation and amalgamation of Elementary Schools. It is futile to continue to limit effort to expansion unless at the same time arrangements are made to staff adequately the newly opened schools. If the opening of a school at a centre is justified at all, and if the duration of school life is to be reasonably long, it is obvious that a single teacher will not be able to do justice to his work. Some children will be neglected and experience shows that these neglected pupils will be those in the lowest class, who will make no progress and whose parents will therefore conclude that retention at schools is of no benefit. Not only, however, are small single teacher schools unsatisfactory: the fact is that there are far too many small schools both in urban areas and in the larger rural areas It was this consideration that led me to ask all District Educational Officers to bring to the Conference, or send in advance, the results of an investigation into a typical urban area and a large rural area to see whether a few large schools could not replace a number of small schools. One investigation shows that for four weak schools, each with its own rent charges, staff and contingencies, a single school with good strength would suffice and might confidently be expected to be more efficient. The whole question will be discussed at the Conference, and as a result of the discussion I hope that it will be possible to take such action in consultation with the local authorities as will result in consolidation and amalgamation together with a financial saving. It is true that there will be difficulties owing to such causes as diversity of management; but I believe that in many cases action will be found to be possible and that the springing up of of three of four hundred schools is by no means visionary.

THE INSPECTING STAFF

Closely connected with this is the question of inspecting staff and supervision. This is a special item on our agenda. It will suffice here to say that inadequate supervision necessarily entails waste of public funds, that supervision is inadequate to ensure regular working and penalise the fraudulent preparation of schools for inspection only, and that the effectiveness of the cadre of Junior Deputy Inspectors has been called in question.

CO-EDUCATION

Another means that has been suggested to effect concentration and economy is co-education. As it is, a large number of girls read in boys' schools, and the Conference will be asked to express an opinion as to the possibility of joint schools for boys and girls in rural areas at any rate up to a certain stage and age and subject to the employment of a larger number of women teachers.

SUPPLY OF TEACHERS

This leads me to the next item on the agenda the supply of teachers. Every effort is being made to increase the supply of women teachers and proposals have been made in connection with next year's budget. This apart, the question which you will now be asked to consider is how far and by what means the policy of Government to employ teachers of at least the Higher Elementary Grade can be furthered.

Further questions that will come up for discussion are, as I have already indicated, school buildings and plans, Labour Schools and the education of depressed classes, Adult Education, Village Libraries and Night Schools. A tentative time table has been drawn up and so far as time will admit, the miscellaneous items will also be taken up.

You will have observed that the Agenda relate almost wholly to Elementary Education. That this is so is deliberate. The problems of Elementary Education are so pressing, the dangers of financial waste and misdirected energy so real; and the social and civic importance of a broad-based effective system of Elementary Education so vital, that it is only proper that we who have the honour to be the Servants of the State should devote time and thought to the solution of difficulties and recommend the application of such palliatives as experience may suggest and discussion determine.

DR. SUBBAROYAN'S ADDRESS

WASTAGE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The Hon'ble Dr. P. Subbarayan welcomed the District Educational Officers and thanked the Director for having asked him to open the conference. "As Mr. Grieve said in his address," the speaker continued, "the pressing problem is certainly one of how elementary education is to be imparted to the masses of this presidency, especially when we are aiming at democracy on western model in this country. It is absolutely necessary that such a democracy should have an intelligent electorate, and for having an intelligent electorate an intelligent public opinion is absolutely necessary. If such public opinion is to be fostered we have got to face this problem of mass education. As the Director has himself referred, the great problem to be faced is that of the wastage in elementary schools and I am sure you, who have had experience of inspecting all our schools in the presidency and having reports from the Deputy Inspectors on the progress of elementary education in the various districts will admit that such a wastage really exists and in spite of the increase in the elementary education budget the results have not been as good as either the Government or the educational authorities themselves have expected.

As the Director of Public Instruction suggests one remedy may lie in the concentration of schools. My own view of the question and I am talking as a layman, is that, it will be impossible to concentrate all schools. Perhaps the best solution will be to have elementary schools up to fourth standard in almost every village if you can get it and to concentrate higher elementary schools in some centres so that these primary schools may serve as feeder schools to these high elementary schools. And perhaps that is the one way of facing this problem of concentration which the Director has raised in his address.

CO-EDUCATION

The next point which he raised that the co-education of boys and gir And that is a real problem that m be faced. As our finances stand to-day is impossible to have separate schools for boys and girls; and everyone of you will admit that education for boys and girls should go hand in hand. When such is the case the one way we can accomplish this is to have co-education for boys and girls at least up to the higher elementary stage and this will involve having a large number of women-teachers employed in our schools. I think that is all to the good because needs of young children would be better understood by women than men. The Director has also raised the point of having qualified higher elementary teachers at least for all schools. That is a problem which has excited the attention of all District Educational Officers because I know from my meetings of the various District Educational Officers who have told me that the problem of elementary schools especially in the districts is to staff the school with trained teachers. And this can be done if the number of trained teachers can be increased. And as the Director has pointed out we are including in this year's budget a number of training schools which will give us the adequate number of teachers that we want.

Another problem that I would like to raise for the consideration by the officers present here is whether education should be compulsory as well as free. Because I feel that the rich parents who could afford to pay for the education of their children should pay for such education, so that people who are in poorer circumstances may have their children educated free by the State. This I know is a very complicated problem and not very easy to work.

COMPENSATION TO AIDED AGENCIES

The Elementary Education Act of 1920 which allows compensation to be paid to aided schools for five years after the introduction of compulsion in a particular area has failed in its purpose because time after time the Government have had applications from aided schools that this compensation should be continued. We have had under consideration how this could be done and this is a problem in which I would like to have the opinion of District Educational Officers because it is important that we should retain these aided agencies which have done such important work in the field of elementary education in this presidency.

LABOUR SCHOOLS

The problem of having separate labour schools is one that you should consider. From what I have seen it encourages separatist tendencies and it is better that we make all children belonging to all communities attend the same schools. The Government have tried in various ways to make the local bodies adopt this principle; but as far as I can see it is not working satisfactorily and many members of the Legislative Council who have been nominated to represent the depressed classes have brought to my notice the caste prejudice that exists and the way in which the depressed classes are kept completely out of schools aided by the State. That I think is very wrong in principle and it ought to be the duty of the District Educational Officers to see that the orders of the Government to allow these children to attend these schools are carried out. Because as I said in the beginning when we are aiming at democratic institutions it is important that at least in schools which get State aid there should be no distinction between community and community in the admission of such children to schools. If this problem could be solved, I am sure, the depressed classes themselves will be in favour of the abolition of these labour schools. They want the schools simply because they see caste people who dominate in local bodies do not want to allow the children belonging to depressed classes to study along with their own children. Only recently the Director has brought to my notice how this is not worked and only yesterday I saw a Government Order that is being issued making it compulsory on all local bodies to take children of depressed classes and see that the progress that has been made, which has been very slow ought to be made quicker so that this complaint of the depressed classes can no longer be made.

QUESTION OF SUPERVISION

A word on the inspecting staff I feel will not be out of place. It is certainly necessary that strict supervision should be exercised so that there will not be any frittering away of funds by giving grants to the schools that often do not exist. I am glad this important question has been raised by the Director of Public Instruction and I would like the District Educational Officers to face this question of supervision, because I know that very often grants are being given to schools that only exist on the day the Deputy Inspector of Schools goes round to inspect the school.

The question of adult schools, village libraries and night schools which the Director has also raised, is a very important matter, especially when you come to think of an intelligent electorate, because we have got to work with the people that are the electors to-day and some system of education should be brought to their door so that they will begin to understand the value of the vote and in that sense these are very important factors. I am glad that this problem is also going to be considered by you.

I must once again thank the Director of Public Instruction for having given me an opportunity of seeing all the District Educational Officers this morning and I have great pleasure in welcoming them here and I hope your deliberations will be of such a nature as would solve some of the problems raised by the Director here this morning. (Loud applause).

There was then discussion on several important educational questions, such as consilidation and amalgamation of elementary schols, and supervision and co-education in elementary schools. The discussion was not open to the press.

The conference will last for three days. The other questions which the conference will discuss are buildings of schools, adult education, village libraries, night schools, depressed classes education and labour schools, staffing of elementary schools, Mahomedan schools, scholarships and stipends, elementary teachers' associations and vernacular tests for Deputy